

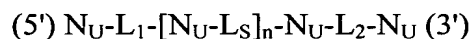
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-18 (Canceled)

19 (currently amended). A method of assaying a nucleic acid, comprising:

(a) contacting a solution suspected to contain said nucleic acid with a compound comprising a plurality of covalently- bound nucleosides, the compound being capable of specifically hybridizing to said nucleic acid; said compound having the formula:



wherein:

each N_U is, independently, a nucleoside that includes a ribose or deoxyribose sugar portion and a base portion;

L_S is a racemic phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage;

n is 1-200; and

L_1 and L_2 are independently selected such that:

L_1 is a Sp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage, L_2 is a racemic phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage, and said compound has greater than about 60% stereoisomeric purity; or

L_1 and L_2 both are Sp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkages and said compound has greater than about 60% stereoisomeric purity; or

L_1 is a Rp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage, L_2 is a racemic phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage, and said compound has greater than about 60% stereoisomeric purity; or

L_1 and L_2 both are Rp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkages and said compound has greater than about 60% stereoisomeric purity;
or

L_1 and L_2 , independently, have the formula CH_2-O-NR or CH_2-NR-O wherein R is H, alkyl having 1 to about 10 carbon atoms, alkenyl having 2 to about 10 carbon atoms, alkynyl having 2 to about 10 carbon atoms; alkaryl having 7 to about 14 carbon atoms, aralkyl having 7 to about 14 carbon atoms; and

(b) determining if said nucleic acid is present by determining if said hybridization has occurred.

20-33 (canceled)

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 is a Sp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage and L_2 is a racemic phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage.

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 and L_2 both are Sp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkages.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 is a Rp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage and L_2 is a racemic phosphorothioate internucleoside linkage.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 and L_2 both are Rp phosphorothioate internucleoside linkages.

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 or L_2 is CH_2-O-NR .

39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 or L_2 is CH_2-NR-O .

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40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 and L_2 are both $\text{CH}_2\text{-O-NR}$.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein L_1 and L_2 are both $\text{CH}_2\text{-NR-O}$.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein R is alkyl.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein R is methyl.

44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein at least one of said nucleosides includes a ribose sugar portion.

45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein at least one of said nucleosides includes a deoxyribose sugar portion

46. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein n is about 5 to about 50.

47. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein n is about 8 to about 30.